SPLEEN,

748

AND OTHER

POEMS,

BY MATTHEW GREEN.

WITH A

PREFATORY ESSAY,

BY J. AIKIN, M.D.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, junr. AND W. DAVIES,

(SUCCESSORS TO MR. CADELL) IN THE STRAND.

DCC XCVI.

ON

GREEN's POEMS.

"MR. MATTHEW GREEN was of a family in good repute amongst the Dissenters, and had his education in the Sect. He was a man of approved probity and sweetness of temper and manners. His wit abounded in conversation, and was never known to give the least offence. He had a post in the Custom House, and discharged the duty there with the utmost diligence and ability. He died at the age of forty-one years, at a lodging in Nag's Head Court, Gracechurch Street." DODSLEY's Collection of Poems, vol. 1.

IN the productions of poetry, as in those of the other fine arts, not only is consummate excellence in every point which contributes to the perfection of a work extremely rare, but a high degree of it in any one of these points is not frequently to be met with. If, as has been done with respect to painting and music, a scale were to be framed for poetical merit, in which all the principal qualities belonging to the art, such as invention, versification, diction, pathos, and the like, were placed at the head of separate divisions, with a number annexed denoting the *maximum* of each,—how few poets could be found who might fairly be said to have reached that highest degree even in one of these; how much fewer, who have approached it in several?

In confidering fuch a fcale, it might be a queftion whether the poet who ftood at a medium height in all of the divifions, or he who was at the top in one or two, and near the bottom in the reft, were the *better artift;* but it could be no queftion whether the latter or the former were the *greater genius.* Excellence in one point will ever deferve a praife, to which mediocrity in many cannot arrive; and though its productions may afford lefs of the calm delight received from performances in which tafte and fkill fecure moderate fatisfaction and preclude difguft, yet they will better deferve the ftudy and admiration of a true lover of the art.

It would be eafy to enumerate various works of Englifh poetry poffeffed of this partial or difpro-

portionate excellence; and ſeveral of them maintain their place as acknowledged ſpecimens of true genius, though perhaps they are more admired than read. But the celebrity of writers depends much upon accidental circumſtances; and if, in particular, we examine the ſhare of fame obtained by our *minor poets*, whoſe performances have not *maſs* enough to fill a conſiderable ſpace in the public eye, we ſhall find it very far from commenſurate with their proportion of merit. Beſides the advantages beſtowed by high patronage and connexions, and the praiſe of cotemporaries of name and reputation, there are certain merits more obvious to the generality of readers than others of a ſuperior order, as well as certain topics more popular and intereſting than others. Thus it has happened, that the ſoft

and harmonious elegies of HAMMOND, referring to a paſſion familiar to all the readers of poetry, and replete with ſentiments pleaſing and natural, though none of them original to the writer, and ſometimes bordering on triteneſs and inſipidity—have had much more fortune in the world than the pieces of GREEN, diſtinguiſhed as they are by brilliancy and originality of thought, but ſingular in their ſubject and ſomewhat uncouth in their manner.

The writer before us was neither by education nor ſituation in life qualified to attain ſkill in thoſe conſtituent parts of poetical compoſition upon which much of its elegance and beauty depends. He had not, like a GRAY or a COLLINS, his mind early fraught with all the ſtores of claſſic literature;

nor could he devote months and years of learned leisure to the exquisite charms of versification or the refined ornaments of diction. He was a man of business, who had only the intervals of his regular employment to improve his mind by reading and reflection; and his poems appear to have been truly no more than hasty effusions for the amusement of himself and his particular friends. Numbers of works thus produced are born and die in the circle of every year; and it is only by the stamp of real genius that these have been preserved from a similar fate. But nature had bestowed on the author a strong and quick conception, and a wonderful power of bringing together remote ideas so as to produce the most novel and striking effects. No man ever thought more copiously or with more

originality; no man ever lefs fell into the beaten track of common-place ideas and expreffions. That cant of poetical phrafeology, which is the only refource of an ordinary writer, and which thofe of a fuperior clafs find it difficult to avoid, is fcarcely any where to be met with in him. He has no hackneyed combinations of fubftantives and epithets; none of the tropes and figures of a fchool-boy's Gradus. Often negligent, fometimes inaccurate, and not unfrequently profaic, he redeems his defects by a rapid variety of beauties and brilliancies all his own, and affords more food to the underftanding or imagination in a line or a couplet, than common writers in half a page. In fhort, if in point of verfification, regularity, and correctnefs, his place is fcarcely affignable among the poets; in

the rarer qualities of variety and vigour of ſentiment, and novelty and livelineſs of imagery, it would not be eaſy to find any, in modern times at leaſt, who has a right to rank above him.

The longeſt and moſt elaborate of Mr. GREEN's compoſitions, and that by which he is beſt known, is an epiſtolary piece entitled THE SPLEEN, of which the ingenious and elegant Mr. MELMOTH has ſaid "that there are more original thoughts thrown together than ever he had read in the ſame compaſs of lines." The writer calls it a motley performance, and apologizes for its want of method: a general ſubject may, however, be traced through it, which is, the art of attaining a tranquil ſtate of mind, undiſturbed by vexatious emotions

and gloomy imaginations, and free from that mixture of liſtleſſneſs and melancholy which has been denominated the Spleen. For this purpoſe, a ſort of regimen for the ſoul is laid down, conſiſting chiefly in the practice of an eaſy good-humoured philoſophy, reſembling that of HORACE in his gay but ſober mood, and comprizing the beſt practical Epicurean ſyſtem that has, perhaps, ever been ſketched out. To ſpeculate upon the various ſcenes of human life without deeply engaging in them; to indulge the excurſions of fancy, but to reſtrain conduct by the reins of prudence; to give free entrance to all amuſive and agreeable objects, and carefully to exclude all of an oppoſite kind—are the principal heads of his didactic matter. But it appears to have been no ſmall part of his deſign, to take the

occaſion his ſubject afforded, of beſtowing ſtrokes of ſatire *en paſſant*; at the ſame time that a fixed antipathy to thoſe high claims upon our belief and acquieſcence which cramp the exertions of reaſon and liberty, and a tendency to free ſpeculation concerning theological topics, are ſufficiently diſcernible throughout the piece. It is not the purpoſe of this Eſſay to give a moral or philoſophical comment upon the author's ſyſtem. Readers may take what they approve of it—and ſurely much *may* be approved—without embarraſſing themſelves about the reſt. It is thus that HORACE is read by all his rational admirers. Meantime, as all we know of Mr. GREEN authorizes us to believe that he led an innocent and uſeful life, we may conclude that *he*, at leaſt, received no injury from his ſpeculative

tenets; deſerving, on this account, a praiſe the oppoſite of that beſtowed by Dr. JOHNSON on ſome of the ſubjects of his biographical ſketches, who are commended for the ſtedfaſtneſs with which they held orthodox opinions, in the midſt of worthleſs and licentious lives.

To proceed to a more particular ſurvey of the poem—The author, after an introduction in which, with great truth, he diſclaims plagiariſm, repreſents his purpoſe to be, that of replying to his friend's queſtion, "what method he took to keep off attacks of the Spleen, and preſerve ſerenity through the ſtorms of the world." He ſets out with a novel and very appropriate image of this noxious being, whom he repreſents as holding a

magic lanthorn by means of which he throws frightful figures upon the ſcene of life—an idea thought worthy of being copied in one of the deſigns with which this volume is decorated.

The corporeal regimen preſcribed againſt the Spleen conſiſts of temperance and exerciſe. The early hours of the hunter, whoſe ſport he recommends, gives occaſion to a ſpirited picture of morning freeing herſelf from the defilements of the night, and triumphantly mounting the ſkies, which affords a ſpecimen of his talents for inventive deſcription; as the well-known line concerning exerciſe,

Fling but a ſtone, the giant dies,

does of his ſingular turn for ingenious alluſion.

A ſatirical and entertaining enumeration follows, of objects proper to diſpel Spleen by the ridicule they excite. This is ſucceeded by a deſcription of the effects of theatrical repreſentations, and muſic, in harmonizing the ſoul;—which, however, cannot be much praiſed for originality. The deſcription of a rainy day and its reſources has more novelty; and the ſimile of the flying fiſh, with the alluſions to the ark, and the manna of the Iſraelites, are ſtriking ſpecimens of the author's peculiar manner. It may be remarked reſpecting GREEN (and I believe the remark would apply to many other writers educated among the Diſſenters) that he abounds in references to ſcripture-hiſtory; a habit derived from early familiarity with thoſe writings, which has not unfrequently ſurvived any particular veneration for their authority.

There is much feeling as well as fancy in the teſtimony given to the power poſſeſſed by the fair-ſex in baniſhing intruſions of Spleen. The contraſt of black eyes and blue eyes is very ſtriking; and the alluſion to the miracle of St. JANUARIUS's head is one of the moſt ingenious in the piece. The ſucceeding grave cenſure on modern female education may ſuggeſt uſeful reflections; yet few, it may be ſuppoſed, will now concur in the advice to confine girls for their ſecurity within "the ſafe high wall of ignorance."

What to avoid, is the next topic of the author's friendly admonition. At the head of the particulars enumerated he places, properly enough, that ſpecies of religion which inculcates gloomy and deſponding

ideas. With no leſs prudence he cautions againſt going to law; and his allegory of a foreſt may by lawyers themſelves be admitted to be happily ſuſtained. In warning againſt party-ſtrife, he takes occaſion to characteriſe the two leading parties in church as they exiſted at his day. The contraſt is drawn with truth and humour; but the force of his ſatirical wit is principally expended on the puritanical ſect, the rigid and unamiable manners of which had very commonly the effect of diſguſting moſt thoſe who from birth and education took the neareſt ſurvey of them.

The nature and motives of the writer's preſent conformity are then explicitly ſtated. Not able to ſatisfy his doubts, he reſorts to the laws for a

decifion, and goes "to Mecca with the caravan." As a confequence of fuch a principle, it is not extraordinary to find him renouncing all "reforming fchemes," the end of which he feems to think abfolutely unattainable, and therefore rather chufes to laugh at the follies of mankind, than run the hazard of making himfelf unhappy by "baffled zeal." In this conclufion he appears more confiftent, than he is in the fubfequent exceptions made in favour of a zeal for civil liberty and freedom of the prefs. But the fact probably was, that his original habits of thinking, as well as the prevailing fpirit of the times, preferved his attachment to the latter, while fcepticifm and the practice of occafional conformity had fubdued his regard for religious truth. The paffage, however, in which he maintains the caufe

of liberty and knowledge, is ftriking and fpirited; and there is much pregnant truth in the concluding remark, that they who apply the gag, always rob firft.

He proceeds to enumerate the things to be avoided, as parents of difappointment and chagrin. A very lively and appropriate image of Fortune, or rather Court-favour, is given in the fimilitude of a figure fportively throwing the reflected light of a mirror into the eyes of a gaping crowd. Like many other poets, GREEN is a declaimer againft his own art; and indulges in fome lively ftrictures upon thofe who miftake a fond defire after poetical fame, for real talents, as well as upon thofe who fupport their claims to reputation by plagiarifm and

artifice. The denomination of "the hop-grounds of the brain" given to verſe, is peculiarly happy. His praiſe of GLOVER, another *citizen-poet* of diſtinguiſhed merit, is liberal and affectionate.

Quitting admonition and ſatire, he comes at length to the direct means of procuring happineſs in life; and having preluded with a rapturous addreſs to contentment, he pours forth his ſweeteſt ſtrains, and the moſt pleaſing effuſions of his fancy, in a *wiſh*. Many poets have anticipated him in the indolent amuſement of building caſtles in the air; but I know not if any one has been ſo ſucceſsful in delineating a ſcene captivating to the lover of rural beauty and philoſophic retirement. It is equally delightful as a piece of landſcape-painting,

and as a moral portraiture; and the plan of life it lays down is a happy medium between that of the contemplative ſage, and of the rational man of the world, who knows how to appreciate its comforts and enjoyments.

He next touches upon a higher topic, and with the ſeriouſneſs of one friend addreſſing another diſplays his ſentiments concerning the proſpects of a future exiſtence. Whatever be thought of his mode of philoſophizing, it will not be denied that the whole paſſage is eminently diſtinguiſhed by his characteriſtic vigour of expreſſion and livelineſs of fancy; and the ſpirited aſſertion of a free right to private judgment, uncontrouled by thoſe who boaſt themſelves "lords of

the manor of the ſoul," will meet with the concurrence of all whom ſuch a writer could in any degree expect to pleaſe. The addreſs to the Creator, ſuddenly checked by a conſciouſneſs of incapacity, and terminating in "mute praiſe and humble negatives," almoſt reaches the ſublime.

The allegory on human life with which the piece concludes, is an extremely hackneyed one. It may be traced through poets of various periods and nations; and, in particular, has been more than once employed by HORACE, in paſſages in every one's memory. But, perhaps it can no where be met with applied with ſo much exactneſs, and with ſuch a variety of circumſtances, as in the preſent inſtance. Reaſon ſitting at the helm of the veſſel,

the Paſſions forming the crew, Philoſophy putting forth the lights, Experience employing the glaſs and lead, the careening places of Bath and Tunbridge, and the dolphins ſporting around, all together compoſe a wonderfully animated picture, clear in its conception, and happy in its reſemblance.

Such is this ſingular poem on *the Spleen*, which few perſons, it is imagined, will once read, without frequent re-peruſals, every one of which will be repaid by new diſcoveries of uncommon and ingenious turns of thought. It poſſeſſes that undoubted mark of excellence, the faculty of impreſſing the memory with many of its ſtrong ſentiments and original images: and perhaps not more lines of

HUDIBRAS itſelf have been retained by its admirers, than of this poem.

The EPIGRAM ON ECHARD'S AND BURNET'S HISTORIES, and THE SPARROW AND DIAMOND, are ſprightly trifles, on which it is unneceſſary to beſtow any remarks.

The SEEKER is a curious piece of theological painting in the humorous ſtyle, the figures of which many will recognize to be drawn from the life.

The poem on BARCLAY'S APOLOGY FOR THE QUAKERS is written perfectly in the manner of the ſerious and philoſophical part of THE SPLEEN; and

is, indeed, an admirable piece, clear and correct in its language, and full of original thoughts. The description of the retired votary, receiving in silence and self-annihilation the visitation of the spirit, is very striking and poetical, and renders solemn and impressive what has more commonly been represented in a ludicrous manner. The sentence,

> For so divine and pure a guest
> The emptiest rooms are furnish'd best,

is, indeed, capable of a sinister interpretation; but from the general air of the passage, he could not intend a sarcasm in this place; and the *emptiness* must mean no more than what proceeds from the temporary exclusion of external objects. Though there is an occasional sportiveness in his manner,

there ſeems no reaſon to doubt that he was in earneſt in his approbation of the Quaker ſyſtem, at leaſt ſo far as to reckon it the neareſt approach to pure chriſtianity; and his alluſion to the caſe of king AGRIPPA fairly diſplays the ſtate of his mind. His apologies for not openly adopting the principles he approves, have all the appearance of ſincerity, and are ſuch as will touch the heart of every reader whoſe ſituation in life prevents him from acting up to his convictions. The honeſt confeſſion,

> Like you I think, but cannot live,

might become many characters of higher pretenſion than Mr. GREEN.

The moſt ſingular of our author's poems is en-

titled THE GROTTO, and was written on the erection of one of those edifices in Richmond Gardens by queen CAROLINE. It is not easy to say what sort of a poem such a subject should naturally produce; but we may be assured that from no other pen would it have produced any thing similar to the present. Yet, digressive as it is, we may discern a general design running through it, that of considering the grotto as

A temple from vain glories free,
Whose goddess is Philosophy;

an idea suggested as well by the character of the elevated personage who built it, as by the busts of the great men with which it was furnished. This edifice is the same that POPE invidiously calls the "hermitage" in which Dr. CLARK was improperly

placed; but no one free from party prejudice will think that he difgraces his company. The variety of thoughts which our author has found means to connect by his plan is very extraordinary, and many of them are truly admirable, though we may fometimes "wonder how the devil they came there." The character of the heathen deities, and the neceffity imputed to them of "recruiting from earth's firft commoners," are excellent ftrokes of fatire. The comparifon of the infect tribe with the human race is lively, but one does not fee what infects have peculiarly to do with a grotto.

One of the beft and moft appropriate paffages is the enumeration of things which fhould, as it were, be exorcifed from this facred fpot. Many of them

are characterifed with peculiar felicity, as fcandal, adulation, fpleen, and prophecy. The mention of Melancholy among the group, ferves to bring in the writer's DELIA, whom we may fuppofe to be fome favourite fair, too much addicted to gloom and low fpirits. She is made the vehicle of fome very fprightly and poetical defcription, though perfectly digreffive from the topic of the piece. The comparifon of the foul in a penfive fit to a fick linnet, and that of the tearful circle round the eye to a halo about the moon, are highly ingenious; and the enumeration of fuperftitious terrors is well conceived. Were we inclined to moralize on the occafion, it might be fuggefted, that this difpofition to indulge in gloomy and terrific imaginations has been too much encouraged by fome late works of

fiction, which have delighted in painting with all the ſtrength of pencil

——— in antique hall

The moonlight monſters on the wall,

And ſhadowy ſpectres darkly paſs

Trailing their ſables on the graſs.

After this excurſion, the poet returns to his exorciſm, forbidding the entrance of the grotto to various other inauſpicious beings, among whom the bigot is well characterized, as confined to look one way only

Through blinkers of authority.

He then invokes the proper nymph of the place, who ſeems to be the URANIA mentioned in a former part of the piece, and allots her the fit com-

panions, reaſon, religion, philoſophy, and morals, —religion having firſt ceaſed " cruſading againſt ſenſe," and renewed her ancient alliance with philoſophy. He repreſents nature as ſmiling at the nymph's preſence, and zephyr " playing with her curls inſtead of leaves." In concluſion, he raiſes the fair ſex to the upper ſeats of the ſhrine, and purſues a very fanciful parallel between the female form and mind, and ſome of the phenomena of nature. The poem terminates with a juſt compliment to the royal founder of the grotto, who, though a queen, prized the friends of freedom, and canonized wiſe men, though a woman.

It appears that this piece was printed at its firſt compoſition, but not publiſhed. Probably the author

was ſenſible that it was likely neither to be reliſhed nor underſtood by the common readers of *grotto poetry*. Indeed, it is not calculated to give out its beauties, or its meaning, to a ſingle peruſal; yet it will amply repay a cloſer examination. Why it was to paſs under the name of "a Fiſherman of Brentford" is not apparent. Certainly, it is extremely remote from the ſimple and ruſtic character which would ſuit a ſuppoſed author of that claſs.

The poems of GREEN, which have hitherto appeared chiefly or ſolely in miſcellaneous collections, do not ſeem favourably placed in them, ſince the reader, in the midſt of a variety of light and agreeable pieces, is apt to overlook thoſe of more thought and ſolidity, eſpecially if they have any

thing forbidding in their firſt aſpect. If their preſent ſeparate publication ſhall mark them out more pointedly to the lovers of Engliſh poetry, it is preſumed that the writer's fame and the reader's pleaſure will receive an equal acceſſion.

GREEN's POEMS.

THE SPLEEN.

AN EPISTLE

To Mr. CUTHBERT JACKSON.

THIS motley piece to you I ſend,
Who always were a faithful friend;
Who, if diſputes ſhould happen hence,
Can beſt explain the author's ſenſe;
And, anxious for the public weal,
Do, what I ſing, ſo often feel.

The want of method pray excuſe,
Allowing for a vapour'd Muſe;
Nor to a narrow path confin'd,
Hedge in by rules a roving mind.

The child is genuine, you may trace
Throughout the ſire's tranſmitted face.
Nothing is ſtol'n: my Muſe, though mean,
Draws from the ſpring ſhe finds within;
Nor vainly buys what * Gildon ſells,
Poetic buckets for dry wells.

School-helps I want, to climb on high,
Where all the ancient treaſures lie,
And there unſeen commit a theft
On wealth in Greek exchequers left.

* Gildon's Art of Poetry.

Then where? from whom? what can I ſteal,
Who only with the moderns deal?
This were attempting to put on
Raiment from naked bodies won*:
They ſafely ſing before a thief,
They cannot give who want relief;
Some few excepted, names well known,
And juſtly laurel'd with renown,
Whoſe ſtamp of genius marks their ware,
And theft detects: of theft beware;
From More † ſo laſh'd, example fit,
Shun petty larceny in wit.

* A painted veſt Prince Vortiger had on,
Which from a naked Pict his grandſire won.
HOWARD's Britiſh Princes.

† James More Smith, Eſq. See Dunciad, B. ii. l. 50. and the notes, where the circumſtances of the tranſaction here alluded to are very fully explained.

First know, my friend, I do not mean
To write a treatife on the Spleen;
Nor to prefcribe when nerves convulfe;
Nor mend th' alarum watch, your pulfe.
If I am right, your queftion lay,
What courfe I take to drive away
The day-mare Spleen, by whofe falfe pleas
Men prove mere fuicides in eafe;
And how I do myfelf demean
In ftormy world to live ferene.

When by its magic lantern Spleen
With frightful figures fpread life's fcene,
And threat'ning profpects urg'd my fears,
A ftranger to the luck of heirs;
Reafon, fome quiet to reftore,
Shew'd part was fubftance, fhadow more;

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T. Stothard. R.A. del.^o J. Heath sculp.^t

When by its magic Lantern Spleen,
With frightful Figures spread Life's Scene.

London. Published Decr 1.st 1795, by Cadell & Davies, Strand.

With Spleen's dead weight though heavy grown,
In life's rough tide I ſunk not down,
But ſwam, 'till Fortune threw a rope,
Buoyant on bladders fill'd with hope.

I always chooſe the plaineſt food
To mend viſcidity of blood.
Hail! water-gruel, healing power,
Of eaſy acceſs to the poor;
Thy help love's confeſſors implore,
And doctors ſecretly adore;
To thee I fly, by thee dilute—
Through veins my blood doth quicker ſhoot,
And by ſwift current throws off clean
Prolific particles of Spleen.

I never ſick by drinking grow,
Nor keep myſelf a cup too low,
And ſeldom Chloe's lodgings haunt,
Thrifty of ſpirits which I want.

Hunting I reckon very good
To brace the nerves, and ſtir the blood:
But after no field honours itch,
Atchiev'd by leaping hedge and ditch.
While Spleen lies ſoft relax'd in bed,
Or o'er coal fires inclines the head,
Hygeia's ſons with hound and horn,
And jovial cry awake the morn.
Theſe ſee her from the duſky plight,
Smear'd by th' embraces of the night,

With roral waſh redeem her face,
And prove herſelf of Titan's race,
And, mounting in looſe robes the ſkies,
Shed light and fragrance as ſhe flies.
Then horſe and hound fierce joy diſplay,
Exulting at the Hark-away,
And in purſuit o'er tainted ground
From lungs robuſt field-notes reſound.
Then, as St. George the dragon ſlew,
Spleen pierc'd, trod down, and dying view;
While all their ſpirits are on wing,
And woods, and hills, and vallies ring.

To cure the mind's wrong bias, Spleen;
Some recommend the bowling-green;

Some, hilly walks; all, exercife;
Fling but a ftone, the giant dies.
Laugh and be well. Monkeys have been
Extreme good doctors for the Spleen;
And kitten, if the humour hit,
Has harlequin'd away the fit.

Since mirth is good in this behalf,
At fome partic'lars let us laugh.
Witlings, brifk fools, curs'd with half fenfe,
That ftimulates their impotence;
Who buz in rhyme, and, like blind flies,
Err with their wings for want of eyes.
Poor authors worfhipping a calf,
Deep tragedies that make us laugh,

A ſtrict diſſenter ſaying grace,
A lect'rer preaching for a place,
Folks, things prophetic to diſpenſe,
Making the paſt the future tenſe,
The popiſh dubbing of a prieſt,
Fine epitaphs on knaves deceas'd,
Green-apron'd Pythoniſſa's rage,
Great Æſculapius on his ſtage,
A miſer ſtarving to be rich,
The prior of Newgate's dying ſpeech,
A jointur'd widow's ritual ſtate,
Two Jews diſputing tête à tête,
New almanacs compos'd by ſeers,
Experiments on felons ears,
Diſdainful prudes, who ceaſeleſs ply
The ſuperb muſcle of the eye,

A coquet's April-weather face,
A Queenb'rough mayor behind his mace,
And fops in military ſhew,
Are ſov'reign for the caſe in view.

If Spleen-fogs riſe at cloſe of day,
I clear my ev'ning with a play,
Or to ſome concert take my way.
The company, the ſhine of lights,
The ſcenes of humour, muſic's flights,
Adjuſt and ſet the ſoul to rights.

Life's moving pictures, well-wrought plays,
To others' grief attention raiſe:
Here, while the tragic fictions glow,
We borrow joy by pitying woe;

There gaily comic ſcenes delight,
And hold true mirrors to our ſight.
Virtue, in charming dreſs array'd,
Calling the paſſions to her aid,
When moral ſcenes juſt actions join,
Takes ſhape, and ſhews her face divine.

Muſic has charms, we all may find,
Ingratiate deeply with the mind.
When art does ſound's high pow'r advance,
To muſic's pipe the paſſions dance;
Motions unwill'd its pow'rs have ſhewn,
Tarantulated by a tune.
Many have held the ſoul to be
Nearly ally'd to harmony.

Her have I known indulging grief,
And ſhunning company's relief,
Unveil her face, and looking round,
Own, by neglecting ſorrow's wound,
The conſanguinity of ſound.

In rainy days keep double guard,
Or Spleen will ſurely be too hard;
Which, like thoſe fiſh by ſailors met,
Fly higheſt, while their wings are wet.
In ſuch dull weather, ſo unfit
To enterprize a work of wit,
When clouds one yard of azure ſky,
That's fit for ſimile, deny,
I dreſs my face with ſtudious looks,
And ſhorten tedious hours with books.

But if dull fogs invade the head,
That mem'ry minds not what is read,
I ſit in window dry as ark,
And on the drowning world remark:
Or to ſome coffee-houſe I ſtray
For news, the manna of a day,
And from the hipp'd diſcourſes gather,
That politics go by the weather:
Then ſeek good-humour'd tavern chums,
And play at cards, but for ſmall ſums;
Or with the merry fellows quaff,
And laugh aloud with them that laugh;
Or drink a joco-ſerious cup
With ſouls who've took their freedom up,
And let my mind, beguil'd by talk,
In Epicurus' garden walk,

Who thought it heav'n to be ſerene ;
Pain, hell ; and purgatory, ſpleen.

Sometimes I dreſs, with women ſit,
And chat away the gloomy fit ;
Quit the ſtiff garb of ſerious ſenſe,
And wear a gay impertinence,
Nor think nor ſpeak with any pains,
But lay on fancy's neck the reins :
Talk of unuſual ſwell of waiſt
In maid of honour looſely lac'd,
And beauty borr'wing Spaniſh red,
And loving pair with ſep'rate bed,
And jewels pawn'd for loſs of game,
And then redeem'd by loſs of fame ;

Of Kitty (aunt left in the lurch
By grave pretence to go to church)
Perceiv'd in hack with lover fine,
Like Will. and Mary on the coin:
And thus in modiſh manner we,
In aid of ſugar, ſweeten tea.

Permit, ye fair, your idol form,
Which e'en the coldeſt heart can warm,
May with its beauties grace my line,
While I bow down before its ſhrine,
And your throng'd altars with my lays
Perfume, and get by giving praiſe.
With ſpeech ſo ſweet, ſo ſweet a mien
You excommunicate the Spleen,

Which fiend-like, flies the magic ring
You form with ſound, when pleas'd to ſing;
Whate'er you ſay, howe'er you move,
We look, we liſten, and approve.
Your touch, which gives to feeling bliſs,
Our nerves officious throng to kiſs;
By Celia's pat, on their report,
The grave-air'd ſoul, inclin'd to ſport,
Renounces wiſdom's ſullen pomp,
And loves the floral game, to romp.
But who can view the pointed rays,
That from black eyes ſcintillant blaze?
Love on his throne of glory ſeems
Encompaſs'd with Satellite beams.
But when blue eyes, more ſoftly bright,
Diffuſe benignly humid light,

We gaze, and ſee the ſmiling loves,
And Cytherea's gentle doves,
And raptur'd fix in ſuch a face
Love's mercy-ſeat, and throne of grace.
Shine but on age, you melt its ſnow;
Again fires long-extinguiſh'd glow,
And, charm'd by witchery of eyes,
Blood long congealed liquefies?
True miracle, and fairly done
By heads which are ador'd while on.

But oh, what pity 'tis to find
Such beauties both of form and mind,
By modern breeding much debas'd,
In half the female world at leaſt!

Hence I with care ſuch lott'ries ſhun,
Where, a prize miſs'd, I'm quite undone;
And han't, by vent'ring on a wife,
Yet run the greateſt riſk in life.

Mothers, and guardian aunts, forbear
Your impious pains to form the fair,
Nor lay out ſo much coſt and art,
But to deflow'r the virgin heart;
Of every folly-foſt'ring bed
By quick'ning heat of cuſtom bred.
Rather than by your culture ſpoil'd,
Deſiſt, and give us nature wild,
Delighted with a hoyden ſoul,
Which truth and innocence controul.

Coquets, leave off affected arts,
Gay fowlers at a flock of hearts;
Woodcocks to ſhun your ſnares have ſkill,
You ſhew ſo plain, you ſtrive to kill.
In love the artleſs catch the game,
And they ſcarce miſs who never aim.

The world's great author did create
The ſex to fit the nuptial ſtate,
And meant a bleſſing in a wife
To ſolace the fatigues of life;
And old inſpired times diſplay,
How wives could love, and yet obey.
Then truth, and patience of controul,
And houſewife arts adorn'd the ſoul;

And charms, the gift of nature, ſhone ;
And jealouſy, a thing unknown ;
Veils were the only maſks they wore ;
Novels (receipts to make a whore)
Nor ombre, nor quadrille they knew,
Nor Pam's puiſſance felt at loo.
Wiſe men did not, to be thought gay,
Then compliment their pow'r away :
But leſt, by frail deſires miſled,
The girls forbidden paths ſhould tread,
Of ign'rance rais'd the ſafe high wall ;
We ſink haw-haws, that ſhew them all.
Thus we at once ſolicit ſenſe,
And charge them not to break the fence.

Now, if untir'd, confider friend,
What I avoid to gain my end.

I never am at Meeting feen,
Meeting, that region of the Spleen;
The broken heart, the bufy fiend,
The inward call, on Spleen depend.

Law, licens'd breaking of the peace,
To which vacation is difeafe;
A gypfy diction fcarce known well
By th' magi, who law-fortunes tell,
I fhun; nor let it breed within
Anxiety, and that the Spleen;
Law, grown a foreft, where perplex
The mazes, and the brambles vex;

Where its twelve verd'rers every day
Are changing ſtill the public way:
Yet if we miſs our path and err,
We grievous penalties incur;
And wand'rers tire, and tear their ſkin,
And then get out where they went in.

I never game, and rarely bet,
Am loth to lend, or run in debt.
No compter-writs me agitate;
Who moralizing paſs the gate,
And there mine eyes on ſpendthrifts turn,
Who vainly o'er their bondage mourn.
Wiſdom, before beneath their care,
Pays her upbraiding viſits there,

And forces folly through the grate
Her panegyric to repeat.
This view, profufely when inclin'd,
Enters a caveat in the mind:
Experience join'd with common fenfe,
To mortals is a providence.

Paffion, as frequently is feen,
Subfiding fettles into Spleen.
Hence, as the plague of happy life,
I turn away from party-ftrife.
A prince's caufe, a church's claim,
I've known to raife a mighty flame,
And prieft, as ftoker, very free
To throw in peace and charity.

That tribe, whoſe practicals decree
Small beer the deadlieſt hereſy;
Who, fond of pedigree, deriʹve
From the moſt noted whore alive;
Who own wine's old prophetic aid,
And love the mitre Bacchus made,
Forbid the faithful to depend
On half-pint drinkers for a friend,
And in whoſe gay red-letter'd face
We read good living more than grace:
Nor they ſo pure, and ſo preciſe,
Immac'late as their white of eyes,
Who for the ſpirit hug the Spleen,
Phylacter'd throughout all their mien;
Who their ill-taſted home-brew'd pray'r
To the ſtate's mellow forms prefer;

Who doctrines, as infectious, fear,
Which are not steep'd in vinegar,
And samples of heart-chested grace
Expose in shew-glass of the face,
Did never me as yet provoke
Either to honour band and cloak,
Or deck my hat with leaves of oak.

I rail not with mock-patriot grace
At folks, because they are in place;
Nor, hir'd to praise with stallion pen,
Serve the ear-lechery of men;
But to avoid religious jars
The laws are my expositors,
Which in my doubting mind create
Conformity to church and state.

I go, purfuant to my plan,
To Mecca with the Caravan;
And think it right in common fenfe
Both for diverfion and defence.

Reforming fchemes are none of mine;
To mend the world's a vaft defign:
Like theirs, who tug in little boat,
To pull to them the fhip afloat,
While to defeat their labour'd end,
At once both wind and ftream contend:
Succefs herein is feldom feen,
And zeal, when baffled, turns to Spleen.

Happy the man, who, innocent,
Grieves not at ills he can't prevent;

His ſkiff does with the current glide,
Not puffing pull'd againſt the tide.
He, paddling by the ſcuffling crowd,
Sees unconcern'd life's wager row'd,
And when he can't prevent foul play,
Enjoys the folly of the fray.

By theſe reflections I repeal
Each haſty promiſe made in zeal.
When goſpel propagators ſay,
We're bound our great light to diſplay,
And Indian darkneſs drive away,
Yet none but drunken watchmen ſend
And ſcoundrel link-boys for that end;
When they cry up this holy war,
Which every chriſtian ſhould be for,

Yet ſuch as owe the law their ears,
We find employ'd as engineers:
This view my forward zeal ſo ſhocks,
In vain they hold the money-box.
At ſuch a conduct, which intends
By vicious means ſuch virtuous ends,
I laugh off Spleen, and keep my pence
From ſpoiling Indian innocence.

Yet philoſophic love of eaſe
I ſuffer not to prove diſeaſe,
But riſe up in the virtuous cauſe
Of a free preſs, and equal laws.
The preſs reſtrain'd! nefandous thought!
In vain our ſires have nobly fought:

While free from force the preſs remains,
Virtue and Freedom cheer our plains,
And Learning largeſſes beſtows,
And keeps uncenſur'd open houſe.
We to the nation's public mart
Our works of wit, and ſchemes of art,
And philoſophic goods this way,
Like water carriage, cheap convey.
This tree, which knowledge ſo affords,
Inquiſitors with flaming ſwords
From lay-approach with zeal defend,
Leſt their own paradiſe ſhould end.
The preſs from her fecundous womb
Brought forth the arts of Greece and Rome;
Her offspring, ſkill'd in logic war,
Truth's banner wav'd in open air;

The monſter Superſtition fled,
And hid in ſhades its Gorgon head;
And lawleſs pow'r, the long-kept field,
By reaſon quell'd, was forc'd to yield.
This nurſe of arts, and freedom's fence
To chain, is treaſon againſt ſenſe;
And, Liberty, thy thouſand tongues
None ſilence, who deſign no wrongs;
For thoſe, who uſe the gag's reſtraint,
Firſt rob, before they ſtop complaint.

Since diſappointment galls within,
And ſubjugates the ſoul to Spleen,
Moſt ſchemes, as money-ſnares, I hate,
And bite not at projector's bait.

Sufficient wrecks appear each day,
And yet freſh fools are caſt away.
Ere well the bubbled can turn round,
Their painted veſſel runs aground;
Or in deep ſeas it overſets
By a fierce hurricane of debts;
Or helm-directors in one trip,
Freight firſt embezzled, ſink the ſhip.
Such was of late a corporation*,
The brazen ſerpent of the nation,

* The Charitable Corporation, inſtituted for the relief of the induſtrious poor, by aſſiſting them with ſmall ſums upon pledges at legal intereſt. By the villainy of thoſe who had the management of this ſcheme, the proprietors were defrauded of very conſiderable ſums of money. In 1732 the conduct of the directors of this body became the ſubject of a parliamentary enquiry, and ſome of them, who were members of the Houſe of Commons, were expelled for their concern in this iniquitous tranſaction.

Which when hard accidents diſtreſs'd,
The poor muſt look at to be bleſt,
And thence expect, with paper ſeal'd
By fraud and us'ry, to be heal'd.

I in no ſoul-conſumption wait
Whole years at levees of the great,
And hungry hopes regale the while
On the ſpare diet of a ſmile.
There you may ſee the idol ſtand
With mirror in his wanton hand;
Above, below, now here, now there
He throws about the ſunny glare.
Crowds pant, and preſs to ſeize the prize,
The gay deluſion of their eyes.

When Fancy tries her limning ſkill
To draw and colour at her will,
And raiſe and round the figures well,
And ſhew her talent to excel,
I guard my heart, leſt it ſhould woo
Unreal beauties Fancy drew,
And diſappointed, feel deſpair
At loſs of things, that never were.

When I lean politicians mark
Grazing on ether in the park;
Who e'er on wing with open throats
Fly at debates, expreſſes, votes,
Juſt in the manner ſwallows uſe,
Catching their airy food of news;

Whoſe latrant ſtomachs oft moleſt
The deep-laid plans their dreams ſuggeſt;
Or ſee ſome poet penſive ſit,
Fondly miſtaking Spleen for Wit:
Who, though ſhort-winded, ſtill will aim
To ſound the epic trump of Fame;
Who ſtill on Phœbus' ſmiles will doat,
Nor learn conviction from his coat;
I bleſs my ſtars, I never knew
Whimſies, which cloſe purſu'd, undo,
And have from old experience been
Both parent and the child of Spleen.
Theſe ſubjects of Apollo's ſtate,
Who from falſe fire derive their fate,
With airy purchaſes undone
Of lands, which none lend money on,

Born dull, had follow'd thriving ways,
Nor loſt one hour to gather bays.
Their fancies firſt delirious grew,
And ſcenes ideal took for true.
Fine to the ſight Parnaſſus lies,
And with falſe proſpects cheats their eyes;
The fabled gods the Poets ſing,
A ſeaſon of perpetual ſpring,
Brooks, flow'ry fields, and groves of trees,
Affording ſweets and ſimiles,
Gay dreams inſpir'd in myrtle bow'rs,
And wreaths of undecaying flow'rs,
Apollo's harp with airs divine,
The ſacred muſic of the Nine,
Views of the temple rais'd to Fame,
And for a vacant niche proud aim,

Ravifh their fouls, and plainly fhew
What Fancy's fketching power can do.
They will attempt the mountain fteep,
Where on the top, like dreams in fleep,
The Mufes revelations fhew,
That find men crack'd, or make them fo.

You, friend, like me, the trade of rhyme
Avoid, elab'rate wafte of time,
Nor are content to be undone,
To pafs for Phœbus' crazy fon.
Poems, the hop-grounds of the brain,
Afford the moft uncertain gain;
And lott'ries never tempt the wife
With blanks fo many to a prize.

I only tranfient vifits pay,
Meeting the Mufes in my way,
Scarce known to the faftidious dames,
Nor fkill'd to call them by their names.
Nor can their paffports in thefe days,
Your profit warrant, or your praife.
On Poems by their dictates writ,
Critics, as fworn appraifers, fit,
And mere upholft'rers in a trice
On gems and painting fet a price.
Thefe tayl'ring artifts for our lays
Invent cramp'd rules, and with ftrait ftays
Striving free Nature's fhape to hit,
Emaciate fenfe, before they fit.

A common place, and many friends,
Can ſerve the plagiary's ends.
Whoſe eaſy vamping talent lies,
Firſt wit to pilfer, then diſguiſe.
Thus ſome devoid of art and ſkill
To ſearch the mine on Pindus' hill,
Proud to aſpire and workmen grow,
By genius doom'd to ſtay below,
For their own digging ſhew the town
Wit's treaſure brought by others down.
Some wanting, if they find a mine,
An artiſt's judgment to refine,
On fame precipitately fix'd,
The ore with baſer metals mix'd
Melt down, impatient of delay,
And call the vicious maſs a play.

All theſe engage to ſerve their ends,
A band ſelect of truſty friends,
Who, leſſon'd right, extol the thing,
As Pſapho * taught his birds to ſing;
Then to the ladies they ſubmit,
Returning officers on wit:
A crowded houſe their preſence draws,
And on the beaux impoſes laws,
A judgment in its favour ends,
When all the pannel are its friends:

* Pſapho was a Libyan, who deſiring to be accounted a God, effected it by this invention: He took young birds and taught them to ſing, Pſapho is a great God. When they were perfect in their leſſon, he let them fly; and other birds learning the ſame ditty, repeated it in the woods; on which his countrymen offered ſacrifice to him, and conſidered him as a Deity.

Their natures merciful and mild
Have from mere pity ſav'd the child;
In bulruſh ark the bantling found
Helpleſs, and ready to be drown'd,
They have preſerv'd by kind ſupport,
And brought the baby-muſe to court.

But there's a youth * that you can name,
Who needs no leading ſtrings to fame,
Whoſe quick maturity of brain
The birth of Pallas may explain:
Dreaming of whoſe depending fate,
I heard Melpomene debate,

* Mr. Glover, the excellent author of Leonidas, Boadicea, Medea, &c.

This, this is he, that was foretold
Should emulate our Greeks of old.
Inſpir'd by me with ſacred art.
He ſings, and rules the varied heart;
If Jove's dread anger he rehearſe,
We hear the thunder in his verſe;
If he deſcribes love turn'd to rage,
The furies riot in his page.
If he fair liberty and law
By ruffian pow'r expiring draw,
The keener paſſions then engage
Aright, and ſanctify their rage;
If he attempt diſaſtrous love,
We hear thoſe plaints that wound the grove.
Within the kinder paſſions glow,
And tears diſtill'd from pity flow.

From the bright viſion I deſcend,
And my deſerted theme attend.

Me never did ambition ſeize,
Strange fever moſt inflam'd by eaſe!
The active lunacy of pride,
That courts jilt Fortune for a bride,
This par'diſe tree, ſo fair and high,
I view with no aſpiring eye:
Like aſpine ſhake the reſtleſs leaves,
And Sodom-fruit our pains deceives,
Whence frequent falls give no ſurpriſe,
But fits of Spleen, call'd *growing wiſe.*
Greatneſs in glitt'ring forms diſplay'd
Affects weak eyes much us'd to ſhade,

And by its falſely-envy'd ſcene
Gives ſelf-debaſing fits of Spleen.
We ſhould be pleas'd that things are ſo,
Who do for nothing ſee the ſhow,
And, middle ſiz'd, can paſs between
Life's hubbub ſafe, becauſe unſeen,
And 'midſt the glare of greatneſs trace
A wat'ry ſun-ſhine in the face,
And pleaſures fled to, to redreſs
The ſad fatigue of idleneſs.

Contentment, parent of delight,
So much a ſtranger to our ſight,
Say, goddeſs, in what happy place
Mortals behold thy blooming face;

Thy gracious aufpices impart,
And for thy temple choofe my heart.
They, whom thou deigneft to infpire,
Thy fcience learn, to bound defire;
By happy alchemy of mind
They turn to pleafure all they find;
They both difdain in outward mien
The grave and folemn garb of Spleen,
And meretricious arts of drefs,
To feign a joy, and hide diftrefs;
Unmov'd when the rude tempeft blows,
Without an opiate they repofe;
And cover'd by your fhield, defy
The whizzing fhafts, that round them fly:
Nor meddling with the god's affairs,
Concern themfelves with diftant cares;

But place their blifs in mental reft,
And feaft upon the good poffefs'd.

Forc'd by foft violence of pray'r,
The blithfome goddefs fooths my care,
I feel the deity infpire,
And thus fhe models my defire.
Two hundred pounds half-yearly paid,
Annuity fecurely made,
A farm fome twenty miles from town,
Small, tight, falubrious, and my own;
Two maids, that never faw the town,
A ferving-man not quite a clown,
A boy to help to tread the mow,
And drive, while t'other holds the plough;

A chief, of temper form'd to pleaſe,
Fit to converſe, and keep the keys;
And better to preſerve the peace,
Commiſſion'd by the name of niece;
With underſtandings of a ſize
To think their maſter very wiſe.
May heav'n (it's all I wiſh for) ſend
One genial room to treat a friend,
Where decent cup-board, little plate,
Diſplay benevolence, not ſtate.
And may my humble dwelling ſtand
Upon ſome choſen ſpot of land:
A pond before full to the brim,
Where cows may cool, and geeſe may ſwim;
Behind, a green like velvet neat,
Soft to the eye, and to the feet;

Where od'rous plants in evening fair
Breathe all around ambroſial air;
From Eurus, foe to kitchen ground,
Fenc'd by a ſlope with buſhes crown'd,
Fit dwelling for the feather'd throng,
Who pay their quit-rents with a ſong;
With op'ning views of hill and dale,
Which ſenſe and fancy too regale,
Where the half-cirque, which viſion bounds,
Like amphitheatre ſurrounds:
And woods impervious to the breeze,
Thick phalanx of embodied trees,
From hills through plains in duſk array
Extended far, repel the day.
Here ſtillneſs, height, and ſolemn ſhade
Invite, and contemplation aid:

Here nymphs from hollow oaks relate
The dark decrees and will of fate,
And dreams beneath the ſpreading beech
Inſpire, and docile fancy teach,
While ſoft as breezy breath of wind,
Impulſes ruſtle through the mind:
Here Dryads, ſcorning Phœbus' ray,
While Pan melodious pipes away,
In meaſur'd motions friſk about,
'Till old Silenus puts them out.
There ſee the clover, pea, and bean,
Vie in variety of green;
Freſh paſtures ſpeckled o'er with ſheep,
Brown fields their fallow ſabbaths keep,
Plump Ceres golden treſſes wear,
And poppy top-knots deck her hair,

And ſilver ſtreams through meadows ſtray,
And Naiads on the margin play,
And leſſer nymphs on ſide of hills
From play-thing urns pour down the rills.

Thus ſhelter'd, free from care and ſtrife,
May I enjoy a calm through life;
See faction, ſafe in low degree,
As men at land ſee ſtorms at ſea,
And laugh at miſerable elves,
Not kind, ſo much as to themſelves,
Curs'd with ſuch ſouls of baſe alloy,
As can poſſeſs, but not enjoy;
Debarr'd the pleaſure to impart
By av'rice, ſphincter of the heart;

Who wealth, hard earn'd by guilty cares,
Bequeath untouch'd to thankleſs heirs.
May I, with look ungloom'd by guile,
And wearing Virtue's liv'ry-ſmile,
Prone the diſtreſſed to relieve,
And little treſpaſſes forgive,
With income not in Fortune's pow'r,
And ſkill to make a buſy hour,
With trips to town life to amuſe,
To purchaſe books, and hear the news,
To ſee old friends, bruſh off the clown,
And quicken taſte at coming down,
Unhurt by ſickneſs' blaſting rage,
And ſlowly mellowing in age,
When Fate extends its gathering gripe,
Fall off like fruit grown fully ripe,

Quit a worn being without pain,
Perhaps to bloſſom ſoon again.

But now more ſerious ſee me grow,
And what I think, my Memmius, know.

Th' enthuſiaſt's hope, and raptures wild,
Have never yet my reaſon foil'd.
His ſpringy ſoul dilates like air,
When free from weight of ambient care,
And, huſh'd in meditation deep,
Slides into dreams, as when aſleep;
Then, fond of new diſcoveries grown,
Proves a Columbus of her own,
Diſdains the narrow bounds of place,
And through the wilds of endleſs ſpace,

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Borne up on metaphyfic wings,
Chafes light forms and fhadowy things,
And, in the vague excurfion caught,
Brings home fome rare exotic thought.
The melancholy man fuch dreams,
As brighteft evidence, efteems;
Fain would he fee fome diftant fcene
Suggefted by his reftlefs Spleen,
And Fancy's telefcope applies
With tinctur'd glafs to cheat his eyes.
Such thoughts, as love the gloom of night,
I clofe examine by the light;
For who, though brib'd by gain to lie,
Dare fun-beam-written truths deny,
And execute plain common fenfe
On faith's mere hearfay evidence?

That ſuperſtition mayn't create,
And club its ills with thoſe of fate,
I many a notion take to taſk,
Made dreadful by its viſor-maſk.
Thus ſcruple, ſpaſm of the mind,
Is cur'd, and certainty I find;
Since optic reaſon ſhews me plain,
I dreaded ſpectres of the brain;
And legendary fears are gone,
Though in tenacious childhood ſown.
Thus in opinions I commence
Freeholder in the proper ſenſe,
And neither ſuit nor ſervice do,
Nor homage to pretenders ſhew,
Who boaſt themſelves by ſpurious roll
Lords of the manor of the ſoul;

Preferring ſenſe, from chin that's bare,
To nonſenſe thron'd in whiſker'd hair:

To thee, Creator uncreate,
O Entium Ens! divinely great!——
Hold, Muſe, nor melting pinions try,
Nor near the blazing glory fly,
Nor ſtraining break thy feeble bow,
Unfeather'd arrows far to throw;
Through fields unknown nor madly ſtray,
Where no ideas mark the way.
With tender eyes, and colours faint,
And trembling hands forbear to paint.
Who, features veil'd by light, can hit?
Where can, what has no outline, fit?

My ſoul, the vain attempt forego,
Thyſelf, the fitter ſubject, know.
He wiſely ſhuns the bold extreme,
Who ſoon lays by th' unequal theme,
Nor runs, with wiſdom's Sirens caught,
On quickſands ſwall'wing ſhipwreck'd thought;
But, conſcious of his diſtance, gives
Mute praiſe, and humble negatives.
In one, no object of our ſight,
Immutable, and infinite,
Who can't be cruel, or unjuſt.
Calm and reſign'd, I fix my truſt;
To him my paſt and preſent ſtate
I owe, and muſt my future fate.
A ſtranger into life I'm come,
Dying may be our going home,

Tranſported here by angry Fate,
The convicts of a prior ſtate.
Hence I no anxious thoughts beſtow
On matters I can never know;
Through life's foul way, like vagrant, paſs'd,
He'll grant a ſettlement at laſt;
And with ſweet eaſe the wearied crown,
By leave to lay his being down.
If doom'd to dance th' eternal round
Of life no ſooner loſt but found,
And diſſolution ſoon to come,
Like ſpunge, wipes out life's preſent ſum,
But can't our ſtate of pow'r bereave
An endleſs ſeries to receive;
Then, if hard dealt with here by fate,
We balance in another ſtate,

And conſciouſneſs muſt go along,
And ſign th' acquittance for the wrong.
He for his creatures muſt decree
More happineſs than miſery,
Or be ſuppoſed to create,
Curious to try, what 'tis to hate:
And do an act, which rage infers,
'Cauſe lameneſs halts, or blindneſs errs.

Thus, thus I ſteer my bark, and ſail
On even keel with gentle gale;
At helm I make my reaſon ſit,
My crew of paſſions all ſubmit.
If dark and bluſt'ring prove ſome nights,
Philoſophy puts forth her lights;
Experience holds the cautious glaſs,
To ſhun the breakers, as I paſs,

And frequent throws the wary lead,
To ſee what dangers may be hid ;
And once in ſeven years I'm ſeen
At Bath or Tunbridge, to careen.
Though pleas'd to ſee the dolphins play,
I mind my compaſs and my way.
With ſtore ſufficient for relief,
And wiſely ſtill prepar'd to reef,
Nor wanting the diſperſive bowl
Of cloudy weather in the ſoul,
I make (may heav'n propitious ſend
Such wind and weather to the end)
Neither becalm'd, nor over-blown,
Life's voyage to the world unknown.

END OF THE SPLEEN.

AN EPIGRAM

On the Reverend Mr. LAURENCE ECHARD's, and Bishop GILBERT BURNET's Histories.

GIL's history appears to me
Political anatomy,
A case of skeletons well done,
And malefactors every one.
His sharp and strong incision pen
Historically cuts up men,
And does with lucid skill impart
Their inward ails of head and heart.
LAURENCE proceeds another way,
And well-dress'd figures doth display:

His characters are all in flesh,
Their hands are fair, their faces fresh;
And from his sweet'ning art derive
A better scent than when alive.
He wax-work made to please the sons,
Whose fathers were GIL's skeletons.

The SPARROW and DIAMOND.

A SONG.

I.

I Lately ſaw, what now I ſing,
Fair Lucia's hand diſplay'd;
This finger grac'd a diamond ring,
On that a ſparrow play'd.

II.

The feather'd play-thing ſhe careſs'd,
She ſtroak'd its head and wings;
And while it neſtled on her breaſt,
She liſp'd the deareſt things.

III.

With chizzled bill a ſpark ill-ſet
He looſen'd from the reſt,
And ſwallow'd down to grind his meat,
The eaſier to digeſt.

IV.

She ſeiz'd his bill with wild affright,
Her diamond to deſcry :
'Twas gone ! ſhe ſicken'd at the ſight,
Moaning her bird would die.

V.

The tongue-ty'd knocker none might uſe,
The curtains none undraw,
The footmen went without their ſhoes,
The ſtreet was laid with ſtraw.

VI.

The doctor us'd his oily art
  Of ſtrong emetic kind,
The apothecary play'd his part,
  And engineer'd behind.

VII.

When phyſic ceas'd to ſpend its ſtore,
  To bring away the ſtone,
Dicky, like people given o'er,
  Picks up, when let alone.

VIII.

His eyes diſpell'd their ſickly dews,
  He peck'd behind his wing;
Lucia recovering at the news,
  Relapſes for the ring.

IX.

Mean while within her beauteous breaſt
Two different paſſions ſtrove;
When av'rice ended the conteſt,
And triumph'd over love.

X.

Poor little, pretty, fluttering thing,
Thy pains the ſex diſplay,
Who only to repair a ring,
Could take thy life away.

XI.

Drive av'rice from your breaſts, ye fair,
Monſter of fouleſt mien:
Ye would not let it harbour there,
Could but its form be ſeen.

XII.

It made a virgin put on guile,
  Truth's image break her word,
A Lucia's face forbear to ſmile,
  A Venus kill her bird.

The SEEKER.

When I first came to London, I rambled about
From ſermon to ſermon, took a ſlice and went out.
Then on me, in divinity batchelor, try'd
Many prieſts to obtrude a Levitical bride;
And urging their various opinions, intended
To make me wed ſyſtems, which they recommended.

Said a letch'rous old fry'r ſkulking near Lincoln's-Inn,
(Whoſe trade's to abſolve, but whoſe paſtime's to ſin;
Who, ſpider-like, ſeizes weak proteſtant flies,
Which hung in his ſophiſtry cobweb he ſpies;)

Ah pity your ſoul, for without our church pale,
If you happen to die, to be damn'd you can't fail;
The bible, you boaſt, is a wild revelation:
Hear a church that can't err if you hope for ſalvation.

Said a formal non-con, (whoſe rich ſtock of grace
Lies forward expos'd in ſhop-window of face,)
Ah! pity your ſoul: come, be of our ſect:
For then you are ſafe, and may plead you're elect.
As it ſtands in the Acts, we can prove ourſelves ſaints,
Being Chriſt's little flock every where ſpoke againſt.

Said a jolly church parſon, (devoted to eaſe,
While penal law dragons guard his golden fleece,)
If you pity your ſoul, I pray liſten to neither;
The firſt is in error, the laſt a deceiver:

That our's is the true church, the ſenſe of our tribe is,
And ſurely *in medio tutiſſimus ibis.*

Said a yea and nay friend with a ſtiff hat and band,
(Who while he talk'd gravely would hold forth his hand,)
Dominion and wealth are the aim of all three,
Though about ways and means they may all diſagree;
Then pr'ythee be wiſe, go the quakers by-way,
'Tis plain, without turnpikes, ſo nothing to pay.

ON BARCLAY's

APOLOGY FOR THE QUAKERS.

THESE ſheets primæval doctrines yield,
Where revelation is reveal'd;
Soul-phlegm from literal feeding bred,
Syſtems lethargic to the head
They purge, and yield a diet thin,
That turns to goſpel-chyle within.
Truth ſublimate may here be ſeen
Extracted from the parts terrene.
In theſe is ſhewn, how men obtain
What of Prometheus poets feign:

To ſcripture-plainneſs dreſs is brought,
And ſpeech, apparel to the thought.
They hiſs from inſtinct at red coats,
And war, whoſe work is cutting throats,
Forbid, and preſs the law of love:
Breathing the ſpirit of the dove.
Lucrative doctrines they deteſt,
As manufactur'd by the prieſt;
And throw down turnpikes, where we pay
For ſtuff, which never mends the way;
And tythes, a Jewiſh tax, reduce,
And frank the goſpel for our uſe.
They ſable ſtanding armies break;
But the militia uſeful make:
Since all unhir'd may preach and pray,
Taught by theſe rules as well as they;

Rules, which, when truths themſelves reveal,
Bid us to follow what we feel.

The world can't hear the ſmall ſtill voice,
Such is its buſtle and its noiſe;
Reaſon the proclamation reads,
But not one riot paſſion heeds.
Wealth, honour, power the graces are,
Which here below our homage ſhare:
They, if one votary they find
To miſtreſs more divine inclin'd,
In truth's purſuit to cauſe delay
Throw golden apples in his way.

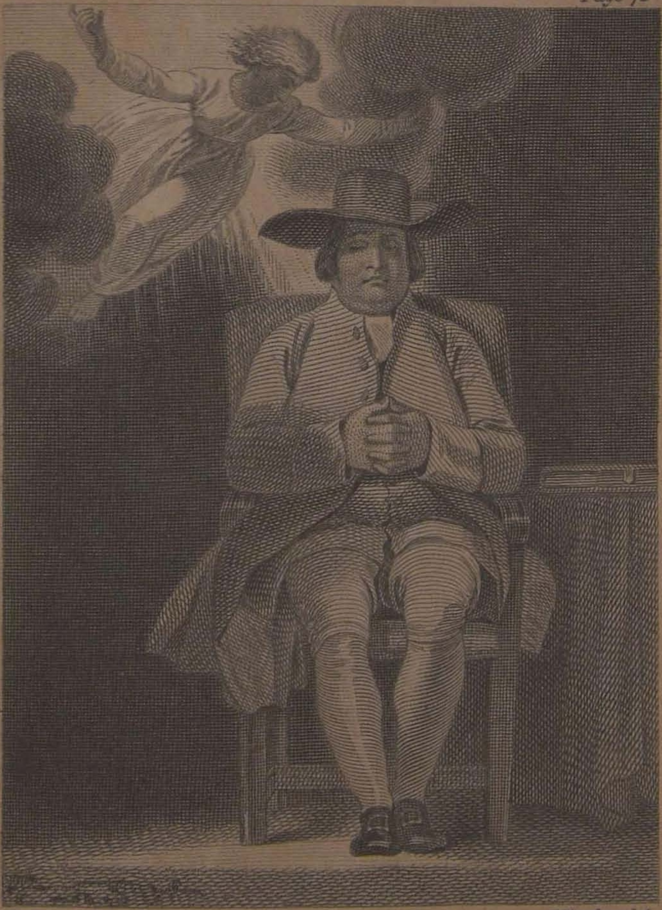
Place me, O heav'n, in ſome retreat,
There let the ſerious death-watch beat,

There let me ſelf in ſilence ſhun,
To feel thy will, which ſhould be done.

Then comes the Spirit to our hut,
When faſt the ſenſes' doors are ſhut;
For ſo divine and pure a gueſt
The emptieſt rooms are furniſh'd beſt.

O Contemplation! air ſerene,
From damps of ſenſe, and fogs of ſpleen!
Pure mount of thought! thrice holy ground,
Where grace, when waited for, is found!

Here 'tis the ſoul feels ſudden youth,
And meets exulting, virgin Truth;



T. Stothard R.A. delt. J. Neagle sculpt.

Then comes the Spirit to our Hut,
When all the Sense's Doors are shut.

London Published Decr. 1st 1795, by Cadell & Davies Strand.

Here, like a breeze of gentleſt kind,
Impulſes ruſtle through the mind;
Here ſhines that light with glowing face,
The fuſe divine, that kindles grace;
Which, if we trim our lamps, will laſt,
'Till darkneſs be by dying paſt,
And then goes out at end of night,
Extinguiſh'd by ſuperior light.

Ah me! the heats and colds of life,
Pleaſure's and pain's eternal ſtrife,
Breed ſtormy paſſions, which confin'd,
Shake, like th' Æolian cave, the mind,
And raiſe deſpair my lamp can laſt,
Plac'd where they drive the furious blaſt.

False eloquence, big empty ſound,
Like ſhowers that ruſh upon the ground,
Little beneath the ſurface goes,
All ſtreams along and muddy flows.
This ſinks, and ſwells the buried grain,
And fructifies like ſouthern rain.

His art, well hid in mild diſcourſe,
Exerts perſuaſion's winning force,
And nervates ſo the good deſign,
That King Agrippa's caſe is mine.

Well-natur'd, happy ſhade, forgive!
Like you I think, but cannot live.
Thy ſcheme requires the world's contempt,
That, from dependence life exempt;

And conftitution fram'd fo ftrong,
This world's worft climate cannot wrong.
Not fuch my lot, not Fortune's brat,
I live by pulling off the hat;
Compell'd by ftation every hour
To bow to images of power;
And in life's bufy fcenes immers'd,
See better things, and do the worft.

Eloquent Want, whofe reafons fway,
And make ten thoufand truths give way,
While I your fcheme with pleafure trace,
Draws near, and ftares me in the face.
Confider well your ftate, fhe cries,
Like others kneel, that you may rife;
Hold doctrines, by no fcruples vex'd,
To which preferment is annex'd,

Nor madly prove, where all depends,
Idolatry upon your friends.
See, how you like my rueful face,
Such you muſt wear, if out of place.
Crack'd is your brain to turn recluſe
Without one farthing out at uſe.
They, who have lands, and ſafe bank-ſtock,
With faith ſo founded on a rock,
May give a rich invention eaſe,
And conſtrue ſcripture how they pleaſe.

The honour'd prophet, that of old
Us'd heav'n's high counſels to unfold,
Did, more than courier angels, greet
The crows, that brought him bread and meat.

THE GROTTO*.

Written under the Name of PETER DRAKE, *a Fisherman of* Brentford.

Scilicet hic possis curvo dignoscere rectum,
Atque inter silvas Academi quærere verum.

HOR.

Our wits Apollo's influence beg,
The Grotto makes them all with egg:
Finding this chalkstone in my nest,
I strain, and lay among the rest.

ADIEU awhile, forsaken flood,
To ramble in the Delian wood,
And pray the god my well-meant song
May not my subject's merit wrong.

* A building in Richmond Gardens, erected by Queen Caroline, and committed to the custody of Stephen Duck. At the time this poem was written, many other verses appeared on the same subject.

Say, father Thames, whose gentle pace
Gives leave to view what beauties grace
Your flow'ry banks, if you have seen
The much sung GROTTO of the queen.
Contemplative, forget awhile
Oxonian towers, and Windsor's pile,
And Wolsey's * pride (his greatest guilt)
And what great William since has built;
And flowing fast by Richmond scenes,
(Honour'd retreat of two great queens †)
From Sion-House ‡, whose proud survey
Brow-beats your flood, look cross the way,

* Hampton Court, begun by Cardinal Wolsey, and improved by King William III.

† Queen Anne, consort of King Richard II. and Queen Elizabeth, both died at Richmond.

‡ Sion House is now a seat belonging to the Duke of Northumberland.

And view, from higheſt ſwell of tide,
The milder ſcenes of Surry ſide.

Though yet no palace grace the ſhore,
To lodge that pair you ſhould adore;
Nor abbies, great in ruin, riſe,
Royal equivalents for vice;
Behold a Grott, in Delphic grove,
The Graces' and the Muſes' love.
(O, might our Laureat ſtudy here,
How would he hail his new-born year!)
A temple from vain glories free,
Whoſe goddeſs is Philoſophy,
Whoſe ſides ſuch licens'd idols crown
As ſuperſtition would pull down;

The only pilgrimage I know,
That men of ſenſe would chooſe to go:
Which ſweet abode, her wiſeſt choice,
Urania cheers with heavenly voice,
While all the Virtues gather round,
To ſee her conſecrate the ground.
If thou, the god with winged feet,
In council talk of this retreat,
And jealous gods reſentment ſhow
At altars rais'd to men below;
Tell thoſe proud lords of heaven, 'tis fit
Their houſe our heroes ſhould admit;
While each exiſts, as poets ſing,
A lazy lewd immortal thing,
They muſt (or grow in diſrepute)
With earth's firſt commoners recruit.

Needleſs it is in terms unſkill'd
To praiſe whatever Boyle * ſhall build;
Needleſs it is the buſts to name
Of men, monopoliſts of fame.
Four chiefs adorn the modeſt ſtone †,
For virtue as for learning known;
The thinking ſculpture helps to raiſe
Deep thoughts, the genii of the place:
To the mind's ear, and inward ſight,
Their ſilence ſpeaks, and ſhade gives light:
While inſects from the threſhold preach,
And minds diſpos'd to muſing teach:

* Richard Boyle Earl of Burlington, a nobleman remarkable for his fine taſte in architecture.

† The author ſhould have ſaid five; there being the buſts of Newton, Locke, Wollaſton, Clarke, and Boyle.

Proud of ſtrong limbs and painted hues,
They periſh by the ſlighteſt bruiſe;
Or maladies, begun within,
Deſtroy more ſlow life's frail machine;
From maggot-youth through change of ſtate
They feel like us the turns of Fate;
Some born to creep have liv'd to fly,
And change earth-cells for dwellings high;
And ſome that did their ſix wings keep,
Before they dy'd been forc'd to creep.
They politics like ours profeſs,
The greater prey upon the leſs:
Some ſtrain on foot huge loads to bring;
Some toil inceſſant on the wing;
And in their different ways explore
Wiſe ſenſe of want by future ſtore;

Nor from their vigorous ſchemes deſiſt
'Till death, and then are never miſt.
Some frolic, toil, marry, increaſe,
Are ſick and well, have war and peace,
And, broke with age, in half a day
Yield to ſucceſſors, and away.

Let not profane this ſacred place,
Hypocriſy with Janus' face;
Or Pomp, mixt ſtate of pride and care;
Court kindneſs, Falſhood's poliſh'd ware;
Scandal diſguis'd in Friendſhip's veil,
That tells, unaſk'd, th' injurious tale;
Or art politic, which allows
The jeſuit-remedy for vows;

Or prieſt, perfuming crowned head,
'Till in a ſwoon Truth lies for dead;
Or tawdry critic, who perceives
No grace, which plain proportion gives,
And more than lineaments divine
Admires the gilding of the ſhrine;
Or that ſelf-haunting ſpectre Spleen,
In thickeſt fog the cleareſt ſeen;
Or Prophecy, which dreams a lye,
That fools believe and knaves apply;
Or frolic Mirth, profanely loud,
And happy only in a crowd;
Or Melancholy's penſive gloom,
Proxy in Contemplation's room.

O Delia, when I touch this ſtring,
To thee my Muſe directs her wing.
Unſpotted fair, with downcaſt look
Mind not ſo much the murm'ring brook;
Nor fixt in thought, with footſteps ſlow
Through cypreſs alleys cheriſh woe:
I ſee the ſoul in penſive fit,
And mopeing like ſick linnet ſit,
With dewy eye and moulting wing,
Unperch'd, averſe to fly or ſing;
I ſee the favourite curls begin
(Diſus'd to toilet diſcipline,)
To quit their poſt, loſe their ſmart air,
And grow again like common hair;
And tears, which frequent kerchiefs dry,
Raiſe a red circle round the eye;

And by this bur about the moon,
Conjecture more ill weather ſoon.
Love not ſo much the doleful knell,
And news the boding night-birds tell;
Nor watch the wainſcot's hollow blow;
And hens portentous when they crow;
Nor ſleepleſs mind the death-watch beat;
In taper find no winding ſheet;
Nor in burnt coal a coffin ſee,
Though thrown at others, meant for thee;
Or when the coruſcation gleams,
Find out not firſt the bloody ſtreams;
Nor in impreſt remembrance keep
Grim tap'ſtry figures wrought in ſleep;
Nor riſe to ſee in antique hall
The moonlight monſters on the wall,

And ſhadowy ſpectres darkly paſs
Trailing their ſables o'er the graſs.
Let vice and guilt act how they pleaſe
In ſouls, their conquer'd provinces;
By heaven's juſt charter it appears,
Virtue's exempt from quartering fears.
Shall then arm'd fancies fiercely dreſt,
Live at diſcretion in your breaſt?
Be wiſe, and panic fright diſdain,
As notions, meteors of the brain;
And ſights perform'd, illuſive ſcene!
By magic lanthorn of the ſpleen.
Come here, from baleful cares releas'd,
With Virtue's ticket, to a feaſt,
Where decent mirth and wiſdom join'd
In ſtewardſhip, regale the mind.

Call back the Cupids to your eyes;
I ſee the godlings with ſurpriſe,
Not knowing home in ſuch a plight,
Fly to and fro, afraid to light.—

Far from my theme, from method far,
Convey'd in Venus' flying car,
I go compell'd by feather'd ſteeds,
That ſcorn the rein when Delia leads.

No daub of elegiac ſtrain
Theſe holy wars ſhall ever ſtain;
As ſpiders Iriſh wainſcot flee,
Falſhood with them ſhall diſagree:
This floor let not the vulgar tread,
Who worſhip only what they dread:

Nor bigots who but one way ſee
Through blinkers of authority;
Nor they who its four ſaints defame
By making virtue but a name;
Nor abſtract wit, (painful regale
To hunt the pig with ſlippery tail!)
Artiſts who richly chaſe their thought,
Gaudy without but hollow wrought,
And beat too thin, and tool'd too much
To bear the proof and ſtandard touch;
Nor fops to guard this ſylvan ark
With necklace bells in treble bark;
Nor Cynics growl and fiercely paw,
The maſtiffs of the moral law.
Come Nymph with rural honours dreſt,
Virtue's exterior form confeſt,

With charms untarnifh'd, innocence
Difplay, and Eden fhall commence:
When thus you come in fober fit,
And wifdom is preferr'd to wit;
And looks diviner graces tell,
Which don't with giggling mufcles dwell;
And beauty like the ray-clipt fun,
With bolder eye we look upon;
Learning fhall with obfequious mien
Tell all the wonders fhe has feen;
Reafon her logic armour quit,
And proof to mild perfuafion fit;
Religion with free thought difpenfe,
And ceafe crufading againft fenfe;
Philofophy and fhe embrace,
And their firft league again take place;

And morals pure, in duty bound,
Nymph-like the fifters chief furround:
Nature fhall fmile, and round this cell
The turf to your light preffure fwell,
And knowing beauty by her fhoe,
Well air its carpet from the dew.
The Oak, while you his umbrage deck,
Lets fall his acorns in your neck:
Zephyr his civil kiffes gives,
And plays with curls, inftead of leaves:
Birds, feeing you, believe it fpring,
And during their vacation fing;
And flow'rs lean forward from their feats
To traffic in exchange of fweets;
And angels bearing wreaths defcend,
Preferr'd as vergers to attend

This fane, whoſe deity intreats
The Fair to grace its upper ſeats.

O kindly view our letter'd ſtrife,
And guard us through polemic life;
From poiſon vehicled in praiſe,
For ſatire's ſhots but ſlightly graze;
We claim your zeal, and find within,
Philoſophy and you are kin.

What Virtue is we judge by you;
For actions right are beauteous too;
By tracing the ſole female mind,
We beſt what is true Nature find:
Your vapours bred from fumes declare,
How ſteams create tempeſtuous air,

'Till gushing tears and hasty rain
Make heaven and you serene again:
Our travels through the starry skies
Were first suggested by your eyes;
We by the interposing fan,
Learn how eclipses first began;
The vast ellipse from Scarbro's home,
Describes how blazing comets roam;
The glowing colours of the cheek
Their origin from Phœbus speak;
Our watch how Luna strays above
Feels like the care of jealous love;
And all things we in science know
From your known love for riddles flow.

Father! forgive, thus far I ſtray,
Drawn by attraction from my way.
Mark next with awe, the foundreſs well
Who on theſe banks delights to dwell;
You on the terrace ſee her plain,
Move like Diana with her train.
If you then fairly ſpeak your mind,
In wedlock ſince with Iſis join'd,
You'll own, you never yet did ſee,
At leaſt in ſuch a high degree,
Greatneſs delighted to undreſs;
Science a ſcepter'd hand careſs;
A queen the friends of freedom prize;
A woman wiſe men canonize.

THE END.

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